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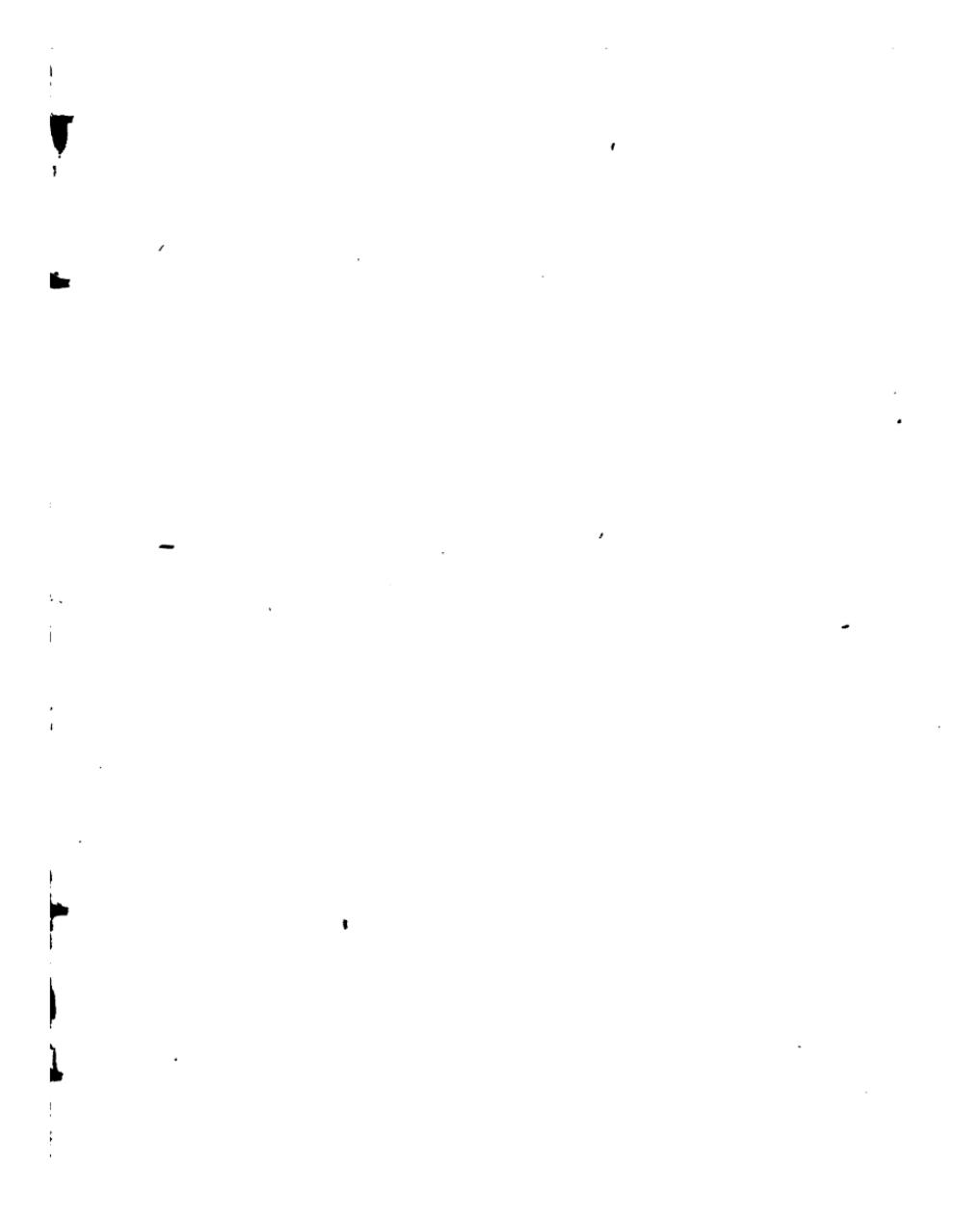
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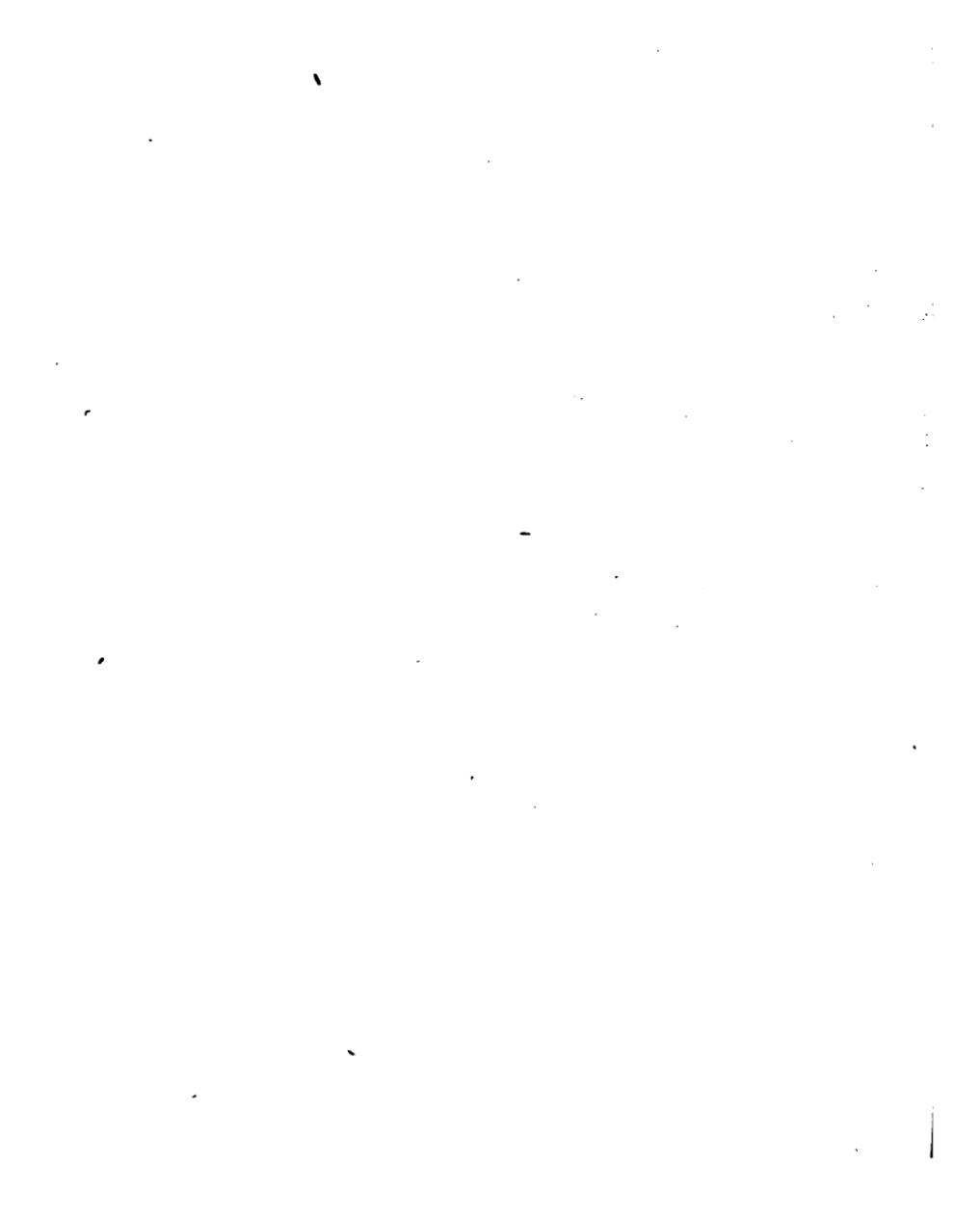
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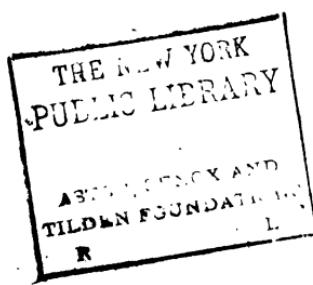
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1. Juvenile literature - Fiction, English

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FRANK WORTHY,

OR

THE ORPHAN

AND

HIS BENEFACTOR;

FOR

LITTLE BOYS AND LITTLE GIRLS.

BY

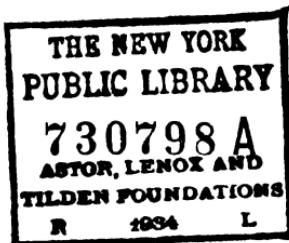
MRS. HUGHS,

AUTHOR OF "THE GIPSY FORTUNE-TELLER," ETC. ETC.

PHILADELPHIA:  
LINDSAY AND BLAKISTON.

1849

ENL3



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## **PREFACE.**

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**Children receive impressions easily, and a direction is sometimes given by a slight incident to their future course, which continues during life. It has therefore been the aim, in writ-**

ing this little tale, to show to its young readers, the rewards which honesty and industry are sure to receive.

# FRANK WORTHY,

THE

## ORPHAN BOY.

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**N**a poor miserable hovel in the very outskirts of Philadelphia, sat an elderly woman, one cold dreary night in November, over a few half-burnt embers, that scarcely afforded heat sufficient to keep her hands from stiffen-

ing with cold. She had sat the whole day winding bobbins; and after having finished all the work she had to do, she had taken out her slender purse, and having counted over the little money it contained, calculated how much she might venture to appropriate to the purchase of wood, and still leave enough behind to supply the imperative calls of hunger. Her means of providing either fuel or food were so small, and she could calculate with so little certainty on immediate payment for her

day's labour from the person for whom she worked, that she determined to go to bed, and thus save the consumption of wood; and to court sleep as a substitute for the food that she could so ill spare. Just, however, as she was about to put her resolution in practice, her ears were assailed by the most touching tones of misery, uttered in a female voice, added to the feeble and plaintive wailings of an infant. "God help one!" exclaimed the poor widow; "what tones are those! There must be some-

body near, that is still more wretched and hapless than myself. And yet what can I do for them? I, who have neither fire enough to keep me warm, nor food sufficient to supply my own necessities. But I have a shelter, which, however poor, is better than being exposed to the cold freezing sleet that is beating so unmercifully. And if I give a part of the little I have, God will not allow the widow's cruse to be long empty." So saying, she hastened to open her door, and there she found a wo-

man lying on the wet cold ground; a thin covering of ice and snow her only couch, and an infant, evidently not more than a few months old, laid across her bosom. The humane woman immediately took up the child, and hastily stripping off its wet and scanty clothing, and rolling it in some of her own clothes, put it into a large basket near the fire, and then hastened back to its mother. With great difficulty she managed to raise the poor sufferer, who was scarcely able to render herself

any assistance, and stripping off her wet clothes, and supplying their place as well as she could, from her own ill provided wardrobe, she laid her in the bed that she had, herself, been preparing to occupy. She then made up a good fire, without considering the inroad it made into her small stock of wood, and warming a little coffee, the only liquid she had in the house, she endeavoured to pour it down the poor woman's throat, but the attempt was a vain one, — the wretched being was too

weak and too much exhausted to be able to swallow, but lay in a state of almost total unconsciousness. The next efforts were tried on the child,—a lovely little boy, that seemed to have braved in a most extraordinary manner the hardships with which it had been assailed,—and now opened its mouth and sucked in the coffee, though unmixed with either sugar or milk, to render it more palatable, as greedily as it could have drawn in the food originally provided for it. After its hun-

ger was thus relieved, it soon sunk into a sound sleep, and the widow again used her utmost efforts to revive its suffering mother.

But this, alas ! was beyond her power ; for, she uttered only a few short occasional sentences, from which her hostess learned that she was a stranger in the country ; that she and her husband had come over from England a short time before her baby was born ; but that both of them having been ill from the first day that they landed at

New York, the little stock of money they had brought over with them had been gradually exhausted, and nearly their last dollar had been spent in burying her husband, who had fallen a sacrifice to the fever incident to foreigners. She added, further, that having a distant relation in Philadelphia, though she neither knew her name, since her marriage, nor her address, —she had set out to travel to that city, on foot, not having the means of paying for any easier mode of conveyance; but, weak

and exhausted by previous suffering, the undertaking had been too much for her. The Almighty had, however, mercifully supported her till she had arrived at the door of the humane widow, to whom she commended her baby, and breathed her last before the dawn of day. The expense of interment was defrayed by the **Guardians of the Poor**; but when they talked of removing the child to the **Alms-House**, the poor widow's heart revolted from the idea of parting with it, especially under the

uncertainty of how it might be treated by those to whose care it might be committed; and therefore offered, for a very small weekly allowance, to keep it herself. This being agreed to, Frank Worthy, (for such his mother had said was his name,) was regularly installed as the adopted son of his benevolent protectress: not to be the heir of any great inheritance of houses or land, but as the successor to those virtues, honour, industry, and truth, which are the surest path to prosperity in

this life, as well as leading hereafter to wealth that will never fade away.

Our limits will not permit us to trace our little hero's history from infancy to boyhood ; suffice it to say that, under the care of his tender mother, (for as such she taught him to regard her,) he grew rapidly ; and by the time he was ten years old he was a lively, active, intelligent, and good-tempered boy. The free schools, which had at that time just commenced, put it into the widow's power to give him

some education; which she valued so highly, that, though he had become very useful, (for he could now wind bobbins, run errands, and do a variety of things that were both useful and profitable,) yet she scrupulously avoided availing herself of his services, for the sake of keeping him regularly at school. The allowance from the public, for his maintenance, was now stopped, as he was declared to be bound out; but the worthy widow (or, as we, perhaps, ought to call her, Mrs. Freelove,) consid-

ering him still of too tender an age to be proof against the bad examples he might possibly meet with, preferred working for him a little longer, to running the risk of his encountering anything that might contaminate the present beautiful purity of his mind. The rapid increase of machinery, however, had gradually made her business of winding so poor, that she had found it impossible to provide for their wants by means of it, and had consequently begun to take in washing. But this much

more laborious occupation now proved rather too hard for her; and poor Frank was often grieved and distressed, on his return from school in the evening, to see her so fatigued and languid that she was scarcely able to stir. He often begged to be allowed to remain at home, and assist her by carrying all the water for her, and performing many other little services that a willing mind can always find the means of rendering. But she answered him, by reminding him of her anxiety that

he should have as good an education as she could possibly procure for him; and declaring she thought no work too hard, that would help to make him a well informed man.

“I don’t want you not to work,” said the kind hearted boy; “I only want you not to have to labour so hard. You have never been so cheerful and happy since you began to take in washing. If I could but find something to do in the interval between school hours, so as to help on a little, and you keep

to your winding and leave the washing alone, I should be very glad."

" You are too young yet, Franky, to do much to help me. Only wait till you are a few years older, and then I expect you will keep your poor old mother like a lady," said the widow ; forcing a smile of cheerfulness on her face to encourage the anxious boy.

" Yes! that I will ; he replied ; " you shall have silk dresses, and warm, thick shawls, and handsome bonnets, and everything

to make you comfortable and happy!"

"And do you imagine that fine dress would make me happy?" asked Mrs. Freelove, smiling.

"Yes if it was through my industry and good conduct you got it;" returned the boy.

"True, Franky, that would give it charms that no dress ever had for me before."

"And you shall have it too;" said Frank, in a manly and resolute tone, and the subject was dropped; but the boy sat the

rest of the evening thoughtful and serious. The next morning he was much the same; and when, in the afternoon, he returned from school, instead of beginning to talk over the events of the day in his usual lively manner, he seemed more than ever wrapped in thought. His mother, (for such he had almost learned to believe she was,) watched him for some time with considerable anxiety; and at length said, "What are you thinking about, Franky, that makes you look so serious?"

**Have you got down in some of your classes?"**

**"No, I am head of all of them. But I was thinking."**

**"So I see; and I should like to know what you are thinking about."**

**"I was thinking, mother, that if I had a quarter-dollar to do what I liked with, I could make at least half as much again with it."**

**"I hope, Franky," said Mrs. Freelove, alarmed, "You havn't learned to trade?"**

**"If you mean by trading, mo-**

ther," replied the boy ingenuously, "chapping and changing with other boys, you may depend I will never do it; for it only leads to cheating, lying, and stealing. I have known many a boy tempted to steal, for the sake of having something to make a trade with."

"Then, how is it that you expect to turn a quarter-dollar to so much profit?"

"Well, I will tell you how. I saw a lame man, yesterday, going through the streets of the city selling newspapers; and

heard him tell another man, that he was talking to, that he could make at least half-a-dollar out of every dollar that he laid out on newspapers; and last night,—when I was talking to you about making something to help to keep us, so that you would not have to stand at the wash-tub,—it came into my head that if I could get a quarter-dollar, or so, to make a beginning with, I might have as good a chance as that lame man, at least, of making money; for I could walk faster through the

streets than he could, and could call louder,—for he had a very weak voice. So what say you, mother—do you think you could trust me?"

"Why, as far as honesty and good will goes, Franky, I could trust you with anything. But you know, my little man, you are very young yet, and I am afraid those that are older and have more experience will be imposing upon and cheating you."

"Oh! no fear," returned the ardent boy; his countenance

kindling with animation at the thought of having a chance of making some money to assist his mother; "the teacher says that I am a very good arithmetician, and it doesn't need any very great skill to sell papers at a cent apiece."

"And do you lay out to leave school altogether?" asked the anxious mother.

"No;" answered the boy; "there is one paper published very early in the morning, and another in the afternoon; and my plan is to get a set of the

early ones, and as soon as I have sold them off to go to school, and stay to about four o'clock, and then go for some of the late ones, and when I dispose of them to come home."

"But what will your teacher say to that way of attending school?"

"If he makes any objection to it, I will tell him plainly what is the reason of it; and he is a good man, and will, I am sure, be very willing to grant me the liberty; for he has often talked to me about its being my

duty to do every thing I possibly can to help you. So just say, mother; will you trust me with a quarter-dollar?"

"Yes, Franky, I will trust you; and am sure, if you do n't do as much good with it as you expect, it will not be because you do n't try."

Sweet was Frank's sleep that night; for he closed his eyes with the delightful anticipation of being a more substantial help to his kind mother than he had ever yet been. He rose early, made himself very neat and

clean, and though his clothes were all of the very plainest and cheapest kind, there was an air of respectability about him, a courteousness in his manner, and an open ingenuousness in his countenance, that made their way to the hearts of all who saw him, and proved of infinite service to him in the selling of his papers. Having provided himself with the number of copies on which he meant to make his first speculation, he proceeded to Market Street, where he calculated upon see-

ing many gentlemen, whom he expected to be his best customers. Being, as we believe, the first boy who had taken up the business, that is now so much followed, and having, as we have already remarked, so pre-possessing an exterior, he proved more successful than his most sanguine hopes had led him to expect. Many, when purchasing his paper, were so much struck with his engaging appearance, as to stop and ask him some questions respecting himself; and his answers served so

much to increase this favourable impression, that he often found pieces of silver, instead of cents, to be given for the purchase of his papers. So successful, indeed, did he prove, that before the State-House clock struck eight, his papers were all disposed of, and he was on his way for a fresh supply.

What wonder, then, that, on his return home at night, he was able to put a dollar into his mother's hand, besides reserving a quarter to commence his speculations with the next morning.

Happy beyond expression at his success, his exertions were unremitting, whilst his kind friend and mother began to enjoy a degree of comfort to which she had for many years been a stranger. The washing, which had distressed Frank so much, was given up; though she still continued to wind bobbins, she was enabled to take the work more at her ease; and the noble boy began to flatter himself that before long he should be able to make her rich enough to give up even that easy employment.

And in this way things went on till Frank had completed his eleventh year.

But, alas! this good fortune was not destined to last. Exertion beyond his strength, and exposure to all kinds of weather, (for he could not be prevailed upon to spare himself, however inclement it might be,) broke down even Frank's bold spirit, and brought him to the very brink of the grave with a most severe bilious fever. And who can describe the anxiety and misery that the poor widow en-

dured, when she saw this darling of her fondest affections, he who had been a source of pleasure to her from the first moment that she had taken him into her arms, and on whom she had rested as her support and comfort in her old age, tossing and tumbling in the wild ravings of delirium, and expected she would have to commit him to the cold tomb as she had done the husband and children of her youth ! And when, in addition to this, she considered that his life had been sacrificed in his

noble efforts to save her from fatigue and trouble, oh, how earnestly did she wish that she had been permitted to continue still the sufferer, and that he had still been the happy, active being she had so lately seen him! It was not, however, destined that she should lose this sweetener of her existence, and the poor invalid slowly, but gradually recovered; but not till various and unavoidable expenses of sickness, had exhausted all their well economized funds. Poor Frank consequently re-

covered only to find his mother more hopelessly involved than ever, whilst his feeble and debilitated frame reminded him that it would be long before he could make amends to her for the losses she had sustained.

The business of washing had again to be resorted to, and though the affectionate woman did all in her power to persuade the boy that the exertion was not too much for her, she often saw the tear steal silently down his cheek, when he beheld her commencing her labours. Re-

solved, if possible, to release her at least from the burden of supporting him; Frank set out one morning, as soon as he was strong enough to walk a few squares, determined to inquire, at every store he came to, if they wanted a boy to sweep the floor, attend the fire, and to run errands. It was not long before he met with one willing to engage him in that capacity for his board and lodging; and he hastened home to announce his success to his mother, to whom he had not previously spoken

of his intention, from the fear that she would forbid his putting it in execution. It caused her many tears to think of parting with her darling, even for a short time; but, seeing that the boy was unhappy while unemployed, she thought it better to allow him to gratify his feelings, and still hoped that something might turn up that would enable them to be once more together.

Mr. Stiffler, in whose house Frank now became an inmate, was a cold, stern man; and his

wife was a weak, silly woman, who allowed herself to be governed by her only child, a boy about two years older than our hero. Frank had too much discrimination not to discover, on even a short acquaintance, that Jerry Stiffler was a very bad boy ; and he determined, from the first, to have as little intercourse with him as he could. It was impossible, however, for him to avoid being much with him ; for the father, whose business was that of keeping a dry-goods store, was a great deal

out, attending auctions; and Jerry, who prided himself upon being an excellent store-keeper, generally prevailed upon his mother to leave the store to him in his father's absence. His anxiety to take this charge upon himself, Frank was soon persuaded, arose from its affording him an opportunity of pilfering small sums of money. This made our little hero more and more determined to avoid any familiarity with him; and consequently, though Jerry made frequent attempts at sociability, and though

the circumstance of their both sleeping in the same room made it rather difficult to repress Jerry's advances, he still remained cold and distant.

“Frank ;” cried the youthful Stiffler one morning, as he lay in his bed, watching the progress of his companion's dressing ; “it is beginning to be very cold, and I think you ought really to have something to cover those bare feet of yours. Why don't you get stockings on, and treat yourself to a pair of good boots or shoes.”

“I shall have a pair before very long; for mother said, the last time I was at home, that they should be the first thing she bought.”

But you will have to suffer a great deal in the meantime. You ought to have a pair directly.”

“But poor people can’t always get things the very moment they want them,” said Frank with great simplicity.

“It’s a shame your mother should keep you with those bare feet such weather as this,” returned Jerry.

“How can she help it, till she gets money to buy me a pair of shoes with? I could n’t go with stockings without shoes.”

“And how long will it be before she gets the money?”

“I do not know,” replied Frank coldly; and having washed himself, and combed his hair carefully, and made himself as neat as his humble means would permit, he was about to leave the room, when Jerry called him back with “I say Frank, come here—I want to say something to you.”

“ You must make haste then,” returned the other, “ or your father will be angry at my being so long in getting down stairs.”

“ Well, come near;” and as the boy obeyed, he seized hold of one of the buttons of his jacket, as if to hold him, whilst he said, “ If you have a mind, I will lend you money enough to buy a pair of shoes; only you must not say anything to father about it.”

“ No, thank you,” replied Frank coldly, “ I would prefer to wait till mother can afford to

buy me a pair, I would rather have cold feet than be in debt."

"But I'll never plague you about paying the money back again. I can wait till it suits you. And I will lend you enough to buy boots instead of shoes, and they will be warmer still."

"No, I don't want them—I can wait," Frank again repeated; and disengaging himself from Jerry's hold, he left the room. "That's right, Frank;" said the hired girl, who, unknown to the boys, had been in the entry, and heard the con-

versation. “Have no more to do with him than you can help, for he means no good in his offer of kindness.”

A few days after this, Frank was startled by hearing Mr. Stiffler say that he had missed money out of his desk in the store, and as he had marked all the notes that he had put into it, he could at any time identify them. This circumstance convinced our young hero that he was in a very unsafe situation; for, though he was pretty sure he knew who was the thief, there

was no knowing what might occur to throw the suspicion on himself, and he might by this means lose his only wealth—his good character. He accordingly determined to leave his place immediately, and took the first opportunity of informing Mr. Stiffler of his intention. “You don’t go out of this house till I have searched your box,” said that gentleman, in his usual severe frigid tone of voice; “my wife tells me you have a box that you keep your Sunday clothes in, and I must examine

it before you take it away ; and have given orders, besides, that you shall not be allowed to go into your room, till I have searched it. Frank had indeed a small wooden box, in which he kept his best clothes; for, having always been accustomed to neatness and order, and not having any place in the room in which he slept, to keep his clothes, where they would not tumble about in the dust, he had brought one from home, which, though small, was large enough to contain his scanty wardrobe.

“As soon as I have finished this letter,” continued the store-keeper, “I will go with you up stairs, and if I find there is nothing in the box that belongs to me, you may go as soon as you please; but, if there is anything that I know to be my property, you shall have the full benefit of the law, you may depend upon that.”

Now Frank, though exceedingly good-natured, was as spirited and judicious as he was gentle and amiable; and, seeing that if he had no one near to

see that justice was done him, he would be entirely at the mercy of this hard inflexible man, who seemed already to have decided on his guilt, he turned over in his mind what course he should pursue to protect his innocence, and his clear, cool judgment, immediately determined the point. In the very next house lived a magistrate, a man whose amiable countenance at once prepossessed the beholder in his favour. This gentleman had often noticed Frank, and spoken kindly to him, when

passing the door, and to him the boy determined to apply. At the very instant that he had thus made up his mind, the magistrate happened to pass; and Frank, calling him by his name, respectfully asked him to step in. The request was complied with; and Frank, in the presence of Mr. Stiffler, explained the circumstance in which he was placed, in the simple language of truth, without making any declarations of innocence, and begged the favour of him to go and see his box examined.

With a look of warm approval, Mr. Gainsborough (for so the magistrate was called) complied willingly with the request, and the little hero immediately led the way to the chamber, the squire, followed by Mr. Stiffler, close at his heels, and Mrs. Stiffler and her hopeful son, who had now joined the party, bringing up the rear. The contents of the little box were soon examined, without anything being found there, that any objection could be made to; and Mr. Gainsborough was turning away,

when Jerry, who had looked on with evident anxiety and agitation, exclaimed, "There's two dollar-notes under the lining of the cap." The magistrate turned and fixed his eye sternly upon the face of the informant, with a look that made the young Stiffler shrink and turn pale, as he sought to hide himself behind the back of his mother. "And how do you know that?" asked Mr. Gainsborough in an angry tone. "Do you know, you young rascal, that you are giving evidence against yourself? Such

evidence has, before to-day, been sufficient to lead a man to the gallows. I have no question of the truth of your information; for you have good reason, I doubt not, to know that they are there;" and as he spoke, he put his hand into the cap crown, and taking out the notes, handed them to Mr. Stiffler, and asked him if they were his. He acknowledged that they were, and Mr. Gainsborough again turned to the son. "Before I was applied to by this poor boy, whom you have tried to ruin," said he,

“I had been told by your mother’s servant girl, of a conversation she overheard between you and him, a few mornings ago. She came to tell it me, she said, because she was sure there was a scheme on foot to lay your own iniquity upon this poor orphan’s shoulders.” The gentleman here laid his hand on Frank’s head and stroked down his hair, in an almost caressing manner, and then continued; “I have evidence sufficient, thanks to your own impatience to criminate him, to authorize me to

bring you up before the mayor, when you will soon find yourself safely lodged in the House of Refuge."

"Oh, sir ;" cried the culprit, throwing himself on his knees at the feet of the magistrate, his face livid with fear, and his teeth chattering so that he could scarcely speak ; "forgive me this once, and I will confess all !"

"Your confession is of very little importance ;" returned Mr Gainsborough in the same stern voice. "I have sufficient evidence without it to prove your

guilt, and the only way, I believe, to save you from the gallows is to make you suffer the consequences of your crimes thus early in life."

"Oh spare him! spare him!" cried the mother, throwing herself on her knees by the side of her son; whilst even the cold-hearted father joined in the supplication. "Consider how young he is;" said he; "And if he is exposed now, it will blast his character for life. If you will agree to stop the proceeding, I will give you two hundred dol-

lars to invest for this boy, for the purpose of setting him up in business when he is old enough."

"That is not the only condition that I must exact of you;" returned Mr. Gainsborough; "I must have your promise to send your son to some good school, any one that the minister of your church shall point out, and keep him there two years. If these two things are done, I shall not proceed against him; but if you fail in either of them the boy shall be immediately brought to justice."

The father gave a solemn promise, and the mother and son arose from their kneeling posture; whilst the benevolent magistrate, turning to our hero, said in an affectionate tone of voice; “Now, Frank, take up your box and go home, and tell your worthy mother that you have thus early proved the value of the good principles she has implanted in your heart.”

Frank, with a courteous bow, did as he was desired, and was soon by the side of his mother, detailing to her the important

events of the day. It was now pretty late in the afternoon, and the poor widow, after hanging up her clothes, (for the weather was too doubtful for them to be put out of doors), had just sat down to rest and warm herself when Frank entered; but scarcely had she heard his little narrative, and begun to express her thankfulness that her darling had met with so benevolent a friend, when she was interrupted by a gentle tap at the door. Frank hastened to open it, and to his great surprise and delight

he saw before him Mr. Gainsborough.

My young readers can scarcely imagine a more interesting picture than was now presented. The excellent woman, turning and raising her hand with surprise as the boy uttered the name of his new friend, whilst her benevolent countenance bore a mingled expression of solicitude and wonder—the boy, whose lovely face still bore the traces of the anxiety and agitation that had filled his young bosom through the day, standing

with his hand on the latch of the door, as if scarcely believing that the gentleman would condescend to enter their mean hovel—whilst the magistrate, with a countenance beaming with benevolence, stood for an instant with his umbrella in his hand, taking a survey of the little apartment. Having done this, he said in a friendly voice; “You see, Frank, I have not been long in following you, for I am anxious to make the acquaintance of your excellent mother”

He then came forward, and the widow, rising, offered him the only chair her house afforded ; but he insisted upon her retaining her seat, and stood, himself, leaning in a sociable manner against the wall.

“There is something in the countenance of this little boy of yours,” said he, “that has made a warm friend for him in my wife. She fancies she sees in his face a strong likeness to a relation of hers to whom she was much attached ; and having heard from Mr. Stiffler’s girl,

that he is only an adopted child, she has sent me to learn all that you know of his origin."

The little that the widow knew was soon told; but on being asked by her visiter if there was nothing about either mother or child that could lead to any further discovery, she said she had found, after the mother's death, a letter very much worn, that was directed to Mary Crawford, and signed "Ellen," but without the addition of any other name.

"And have you that letter

now?" asked Mr. Gainsborough eagerly.

"I believe I have," said the widow; "for I put it by, thinking that Frank would prize anything that had belonged to his mother."

She then searched an old trunk, and at last produced the paper—"It is my wife's handwriting, as well as her Christian name;" said the benevolent man, with an expression of great delight; "and Mary Crawford was the name of Frank's mother before she was married.

We never heard the name of her husband, the letter announcing her marriage having, I suppose, miscarried ; but there can be no doubt that the little fellow is the son of my wife's favourite cousin, and I assure you we shall all be proud to claim him as a relative."

"I thank God," said the excellent old woman, "that my boy will have some one to belong to, when I am gone."

"I have still more good news for you ;" returned Mr. Gainsborough ; "Frank's grandfather

left some little property, and as his mother was his only child, it has been lying accumulating till some authentic information could be obtained respecting his mother's fate, and though it was not a very large sum, it is now sufficient to yield an interest that you and your boy will be able to live comfortably upon."

"Oh, my mother!" exclaimed Frank, running and clasping his arms around the neck of his more than parent, in an ecstacy

of delight, “then, I shall be able to keep you from wearing yourself out, with washing, after all!”



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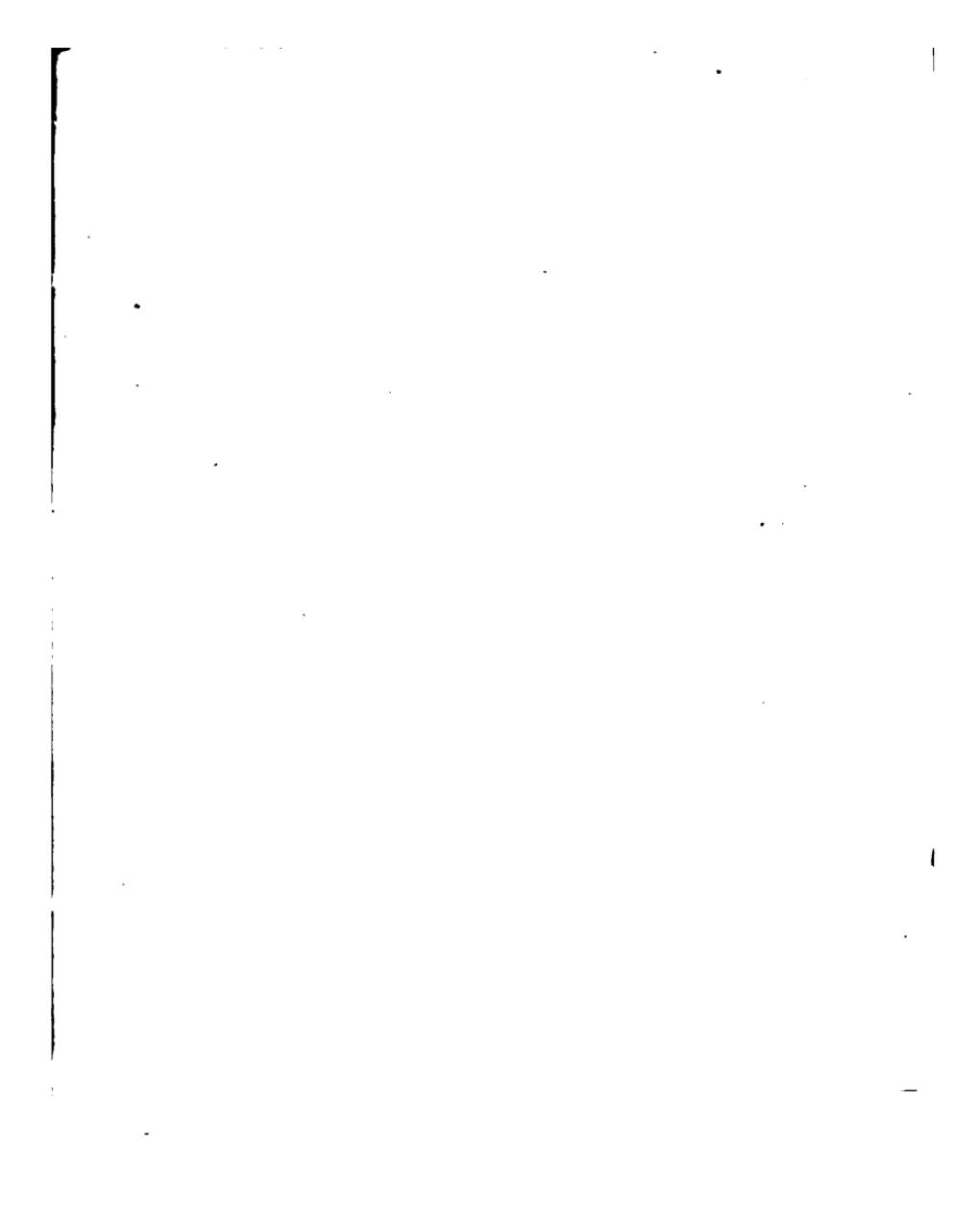
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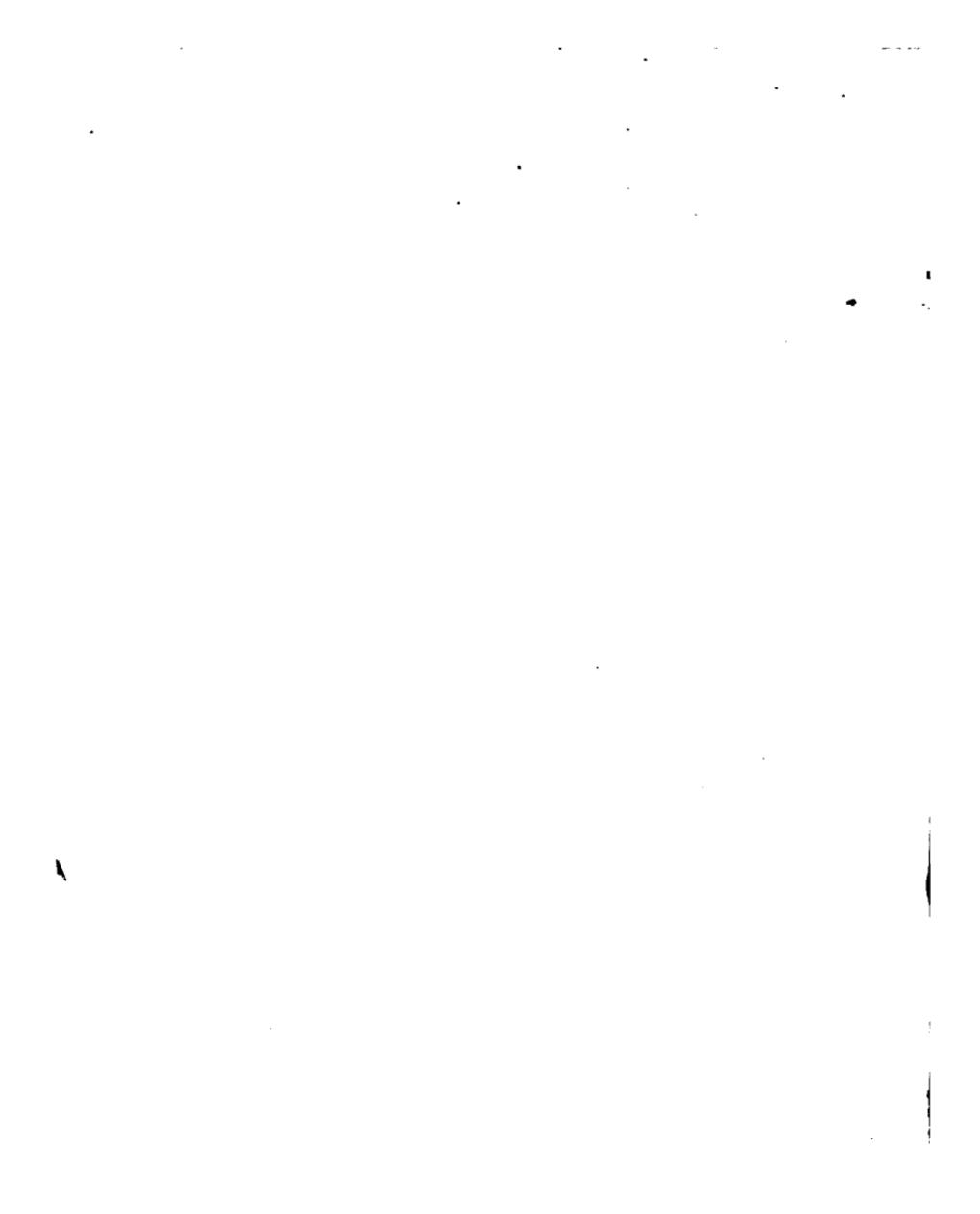
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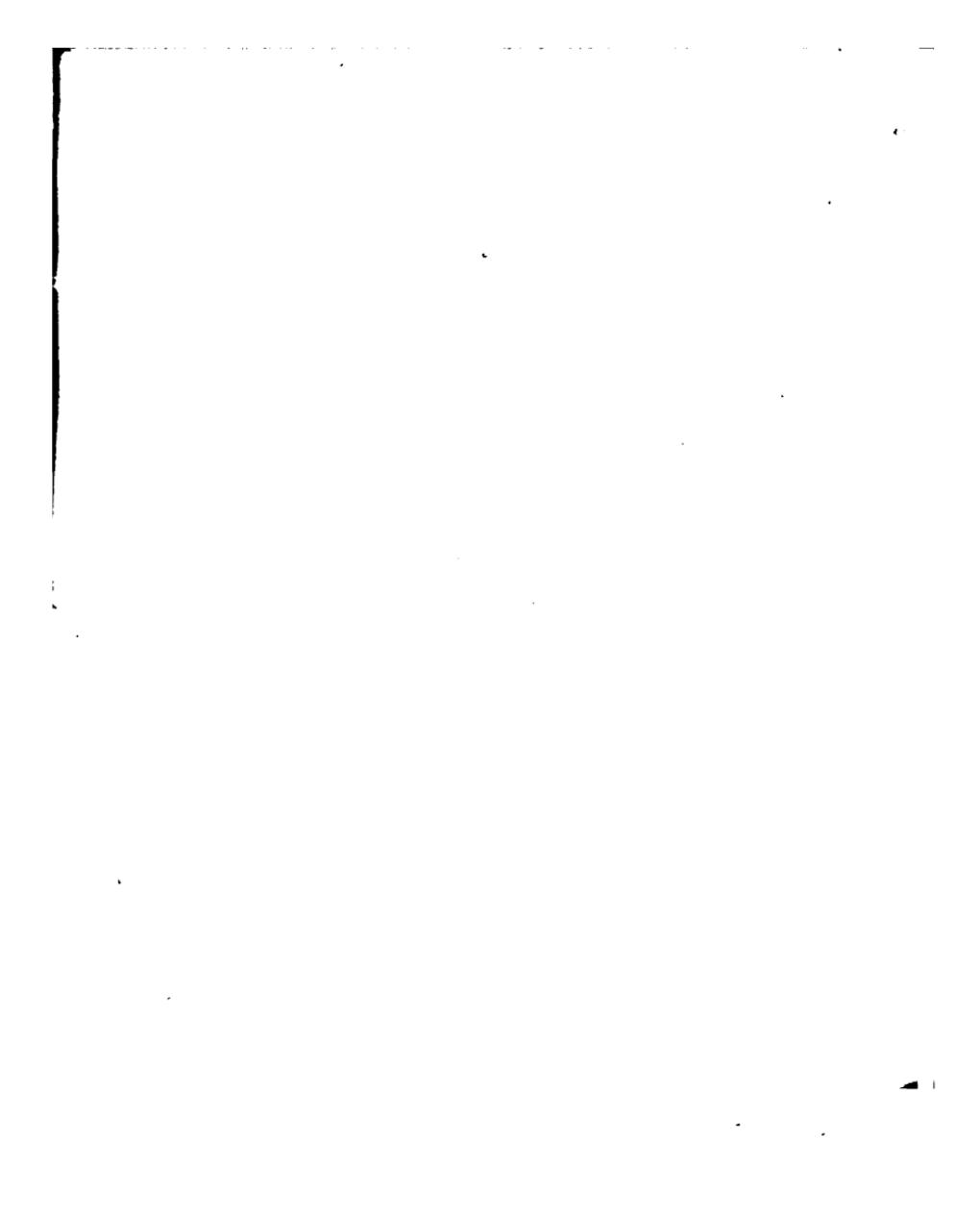
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